

THE BLIND AMERICAN

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THE BLIND AMERICAN

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NEVADA LAW EXEMPTS SPOUSE INCOME

A new state law exempting \$200 of earned income by the spouse of a blind aid recipient -- and thereby easing the onerous support responsibility of working spouses -- has been passed by the Nevada Legislature as the climax of a sustained campaign by the Nevada Federation of the Blind.

The statute, passed as an amendment to the Nevada Aid to Blind Act, reads officially as follows: "For the purpose of encouraging the spouse of a recipient of aid [to the blind] to retain or seek employment in order to be self-supporting and to avoid becoming a recipient of public aid, the net earnings of such spouse not in excess of \$200 per month, after deduction for expenses incurred in connection with such earnings and for the support of any minors dependent upon such spouse, any payments of any indebtedness incurred for medical care or other necessities of life, shall not be considered community property. Where such spouse is engaged in seasonal employment, the estimated annual earnings shall be prorated on a monthly basis."

The successful campaign of Nevada's organized blind for the "spouse-exemption" law dates back to 1960, when the state's Attorney General issued an adverse opinion forcing the Nevada Welfare Department to reverse a long-standing policy. Prior to that date, spouses were ruled to be included within provisions of the state law that no relative of a blind-aid recipient could be held liable for contributions to his support. The result of the Attorney General's edict was that a spouse's need must be measured on the same budget basis as that of the recipient, and any income on his or her part in excess of the rigid public assistance standard had to be considered as income to the blind recipient.

The effect of this "harsh policy," as the Nevada Federation pointed out last year in a convention resolution, was to "deprive the working spouse of a recipient of aid to the blind of all incentive to continue to be fully self-supporting so that he or she can fully meet his or her own needs and, if possible, help meet the needs of the blind spouse."

The Federation also declared that "if the self-supporting spouse of a blind recipient continues to be severely penalized by having his needs reduced to the level of a recipient of public assistance, it will inevitably tend to disrupt marriages between blind and sighted persons and strongly discourage such unions, to the disadvantage of all concerned."

Following the negative ruling of the Attorney General, the organized blind of Nevada went to the State Welfare Department for

administrative action to modify these drastic effects. Their petitions were turned aside with the bland response that nothing could be done. At that point the state Federation turned to the Legislature, seeking an amendment to the aid law which would "specifically provide that all of the needs of a spouse of a recipient of aid to the blind must be fully met before the balance of any earnings of such spouse can be considered or construed as income to the blind recipient."

The victorious result of this campaign for legislative redress of grievance, waged by the blind federationists of Nevada, provides a mark for other states to shoot at. And it proves once again that, even in the state of Reno and Las Vegas, self-organization by the blind is no gamble-- but a sure bet.

OPERATION PAKISTAN

By Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant

(Editor's note: Dr. Grant, retired Los Angeles school teacher and administrator, is a member of the board of directors of the National Federation of the Blind. She returned recently from the second of two year-long sojourns in Pakistan, where she worked intensively on educational problems of the blind. For a biographical sketch of Dr. Grant, see THE BLIND AMERICAN, June 1963.)

The indomitable, selfless and imaginative spirit which has always characterized the National Federation of the Blind in these 23 years of its existence was at its best on the morning of Saturday, July 6, 1963 -- the fourth day of the annual convention held this year in Philadelphia -- when a motion was made by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, President Emeritus, that the organized blind of the Federation lend their support (both moral and substantial) to helping their fellow blind in far-flung countries overseas, where conditions for blind persons are still culturally very inadequate.

The response was dynamic. A motion to set up a fund within the Federation to provide equipment, materials and other assistance to the blind in Pakistan was adopted unanimously. In a paper read to the convention the previous day, I had made known some of the conditions which prevail in that area of the world, where the majority of blind adults are still in the ranks of the underprivileged, the unfortunate, the destitute,

the defeated. Blind children there are considered to be uneducable, lacking in intelligence, fit only as potential beggars earning a pittance rather than a livelihood for themselves and their families. Of an estimated 65,000 blind children of school age throughout the country, fewer than 180 are in any kind of educational institution; and the few who are there are for the most part given vocational education in the form of chair caning and basketry -- at which trades even the most expert cannot make a living.

But the people of Pakistan are beginning to see in their blind children "just children," not outcasts. They are beginning to include them in their families, instead of hiding them even from the view of their closest relatives and friends. Pakistani people are beginning to see that their blind children can be educated in special day classes for blind children in the regular schools, with the aid of a specially trained teacher -- at no other expense than the salary of that teacher.

The old idea that blind children had to be removed from their homes and sent to residential schools is fast giving way to the new idea that children who do not see can be educated alongside those who do see. Pakistani people, by and large, do not want to send their children away from home. The tradition has been to keep the child at home without providing him with the education the other members of the family may be receiving. In the villages where the incidence of blindness is highest, the blind child has only two choices: to beg in the streets, or to stay at home. The parents of blind children themselves have no other answer.

Yet over and against this discouraging picture, a distinct gleam of hope is shining through. Young blind people are waking to the fact that they can, and want to, work like their fellow citizens. With astonishing frequency, I have been approached by blind boys of twelve years and more for requests to learn to read and write. The Pakistani Association of the Blind -- a vital, growing organization of blind persons -- started last winter to coach young blind boys in reading Urdu, even in learning a little English -- as well as in the rudiments of arithmetic and (after the acquisition of a second-hand typewriter) in typing, the medium by which blind persons communicate in writing with the sighted. Typewriters are scarce and expensive in countries like Pakistan. They are practically the monopoly of the business houses, rather than the possession of private individuals or of schools.

It is noteworthy that blind boys are taking the lead in this break with tradition. Blind girls will follow, but slowly, because of the present status of women in public. There need be no barrier, however, to the blind girl receiving education during her school-age years. The transformation of the image of blindness in these developing countries is a slow

process, but already the start towards the change is well-grounded and secure. Pakistani people have made it so themselves. Two fundamental forces are at work effecting the change: education of the youthful blind, and the movement among blind people themselves for self-determination, self-realization, and opportunity.

But there are no materials to assist blind children when we do bring them to school. There are no slates, styluses, braille paper, braille machines, and, most important of all, braille textbooks. To provide these basic tools of education, the National Federation of the Blind has set up a substantial equipment fund for the purchase of materials to be sent where they are needed most and where they can be put to immediate use.

Several of the NFB's state affiliates are working on individual projects at present. Iowa has granted a scholarship to a teacher attending the Seminar on the Education of Blind Youth in Pakistan. Colorado is sending materials to a small but progressive blind school in that country. Virginia has provided a bicycle for a village teacher to assist in the instruction of two blind children. Distances there are great, transportation inadequate, and teachers' salaries insufficient for anything beyond bare living expenses.

The NFB's Equipment Fund is the result of state pledges and individual donations. But, more than that, it is a declaration of intention by the organized blind to extend a helping hand to their fellow blind abroad -- not as charity, not as largesse, but rather to help themselves, to make the pulling-up of their own bootstraps just a little easier.

Blind people are on the march throughout the world; and, like the dawn, you cannot hold them back.

CENSORSHIP OF TALKING BOOKS?

The issue of censorship is of vital importance to all free men. But it has special, and extraordinary, significance for blind readers whose principal access to literature, in the form of recordings and braille publications, is everywhere governed by boards of selection and review -- and governed also by custodial and protective attitudes which easily become translated into arbitrary standards of what is "good for the blind."

For this reason it is heartening to note the editorial response of the BVA BULLETIN, an official publication of the Blinded Veterans Association, to a letter from a member calling for the ban of two non-fiction works recently recorded on Talking Books. The correspondent asserted that the two books -- May Man Prevail, by Erich Fromm, and The Precarious Vision, by Peter L. Berger -- were to his way of thinking "offensive and subversive." And he went on to label the volumes "pure communist propaganda" which therefore "should not be distributed through the U. S. mail at the expense of the government."

In reply, BULLETIN Editor Jack Feldman (writing in the June-July-August issue) observed that "Mr. Murphy has the right to express his views as to the propriety of these publications." But he added that the letter writer "has not the right to impose his views on others by threatening to prevent the two books from being distributed."

"Whether Mr. Murphy is aware of it or not," the editor wrote, "he has placed himself in the untenable position of unofficial censor. By applying a label to these publications and, in effect, threatening their removal from the library shelf, he is attempting to deny access to these books."

The BVA editorial pointed out that Talking Books require the same protection given books for the general public against over-zealous efforts to limit the range of their thought and expression: "They are the means by which the blind seek information and pleasure and must represent a cross section of titles available to the sighted." Recalling the ancient and continuing struggle between the tolerant spirit of liberty and the intolerant frenzies of censorship, Editor Feldman cited numerous attempts over the centuries to suppress critical or controversial writings -- including those of Dante, Galileo and Benjamin Franklin -- which have since become venerated as classics. And he reminded his readers that "the greatest triumph of the censor came in May 1933 when 25,000 books by Jewish authors were burned in a giant bonfire at the University of Berlin."

It may be added that, while the author of The Precarious Vision is not known to us, the author of May Man Prevail is well-known indeed. Dr. Erich Fromm, one of America's most prominent authorities on psychoanalysis and social psychology, is the author of (among other books) Escape from Freedom -- a classic study of totalitarianism in politics and personality structure, as thoroughly devastating in its indictment of communism as of Nazi totalitarianism. His latest book, May Man Prevail, is a fervent plea for peace and sanity in the relations between nations. As such it may be expected to offend all those who regard these ideals as subversive.

More than most groups of Americans, the blind can ill afford any increase in the numbers of individuals eager to supervise and control their reading matter. In the nature of things, if only for economic and technical reasons, the literature available to blind readers must always be selective; and where there is the power of selection there is the temptation to censorship. One of the more subtle forms which this has taken in the past, on the part of librarians and recording agencies for the blind, has been the avoidance of the intellectual, the thoughtful and the "difficult" -- in favor of the conventional, the popular, and (in a word) the simple. Blind persons desperately searching for brailled or recorded literature which may bring them into genuine contact with important issues and great ideas have sometimes suspected the existence of a tacit agreement among their benefactors to keep them blissfully in ignorance of all the significant currents of thought and opinion which occupy the intellectual world of those possessing sight.

The Blind Veterans Association, and the editor of its BULLETIN, deserve to be commended for their forthright and courageous stand against censorship. But it is not enough to extend felicitations. Blind Americans can best support that position by taking action on their own, individually and collectively, to stiffen the resolve of the Division for the Blind of the Library of Congress never to make use of that deadliest weapon of the enemies of freedom: the censor's pencil.

The following resolution, adopted unanimously by the 1963 convention of the National Federation of the Blind, points the general direction which such efforts should take:

"WHEREAS, the Library of Congress publishes for the blind a small fraction of the number of titles published each year in print; and

"WHEREAS, those titles published for the blind are frequently condensed and as a result weakened in literary content; and

"WHEREAS, the selection of those titles to be published gives preference to the trivial and minor works; and

"WHEREAS, these practices result in an impoverishment of materials available to the blind for reading;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this 6th day of July, 1963, that this Federation strongly urges that the Library of Congress put an end to these various and unfortunate practices by:
1) publishing in full all books selected for publication, and 2) improving

the method of selection by making available titles with a more valuable literary content and otherwise of more enduring importance."

LOS ANGELES SHOP WORKERS UNIONIZE

Twenty-six of the 90 employees of the Los Angeles Workshop for the Blind have joined the AFL-CIO State Employees Union in a voluntary decision taken June 27, according to a report in the California Council of the Blind BULLETIN. "This figure is not startling," the journal added. "There will be more signing up. What is significant is that the State Employees Union has accepted blind people as people -- people who are a normal and average segment of the general public."

The Los Angeles workers' decision is also significant as a sequel to the similar action carried out on a larger scale last spring by blind workers of the Berkeley workshop of California Industries for the Blind. (See article in THE BLIND AMERICAN, May 1963.) The unionizing of the Berkeley shop workers was followed by management reprisals in the form of mass layoffs and veiled threats -- which in turn resulted in a successful strike for reinstatement and increased wages.

One of the leaders of the Berkeley shop workers, as quoted by the COUNCIL BULLETIN, has pinpointed the importance of the strike and its aftermath. "At long last, we have a very effective instrumentality in our union for dealing with [shop management]. As a result of our action, effective machinery is now in effect for correcting bad situations in all three of the workshops for the blind in this state. Our fellow workers in the other two shops can join our same AFL-CIO union with full confidence that their grievances will be accorded consideration by responsible authorities in Sacramento, and we have shattered the spurious alibi of the Department of Education to justify starvation wage rates and inept management."

The right of employees of California public agencies to organize and to deal with their employing agencies through their unions has been recognized by the Legislature through a recent amendment to the Government Code. Moreover, as blind persons the sheltered shop workers' right to organize is further protected by California's right-to-organize statute, enacted after a vigorous campaign by the California Council paralleling the Federal action sought by the National Federation of the Blind.

PROSPECTS AND FEARS OF BLIND SHOP WORKERS

By Tom Joe

(Editor's note: Mr. Joe, an active member of the California Council of the Blind, recently served a legislative internship with State Assemblyman Philip Burton. He is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, where he also earned a master's degree in political science. His article, addressed specifically to workers in California's sheltered shops, is presented here as of general interest and importance to blind workshop employees in all states.)

The first need of the organized employees of California Industries for the Blind is to define themselves forcefully and explicitly as workers. This is necessary although many of these employees have no specific skills and most of them do not work a full 40 hours per week. These facts are often used to justify the low pay and lack of rights of these employees. Workshop managers argue that their employees are not workers because "They can't do anything very productive and besides, they don't work full time. We don't pressure them; they can come in one day and stay home the next."

But from the employees' point of view, the lack of challenge of workshop production is a detriment and not a benefit. They want skilled training and they want full-time work. They would admit that folding pillow-slips is not very productive work, and they would be happy to do something more difficult, if it were available. As for their irregular work week, one of the most common complaints among shop workers is the dearth of steady work. Many times they come to the shop in the morning to sit around and wait for work that never comes in. Since they are usually paid on a piece rate, there is continual strife over the amount of work allocated to each person. The employees of C.I.B. have a great need to see themselves as workers -- workers organized together for mutual benefit.

It is important that C.I.B. employees establish themselves as workers now because of a growing tendency, throughout the state and the nation, to view workshops as places of training for handicapped persons. The literature on the subject stresses that workshops are half-way houses, helping disabled persons bridge the gap between uselessness and normal productivity. The short-term and transitional character of workshop activity is stressed. The disabled person theoretically stays at the shop only long enough to regain his self-confidence and to develop a useful skill. Then he goes out into the competitive market place.

"Occupational therapy," "work conditioning," "psychological adjustment," -- these are the terms used to describe the workshop experience. But the handicapped worker soon realizes that these words are meaningless. He does not receive any training which would enable him to hold an outside job, for what ordinary employer could afford to have pillowcases folded at the minimum wage? The employer contracts out such duties to workshops, a procedure which saves him money and allows him to "do something for the handicapped."

The shop worker further realizes that even if he were to receive skilled training (which he does not) he would probably find himself barred from competitive employment by prevailing social attitudes. Thus, while the philosophy of workshops as training grounds is admirable, the handicapped employees realistically anticipates spending the rest of his working life in the confines of the sheltered shop. Most shop workers, including those at C. I. B., have been there for many years and have no hope of leaving.

Given the reality that sheltered shops are places of work and not temporary places of training and psychological adjustment, the task is to establish proper working conditions, including payment of the minimum wage. It is interesting to note that the state has run the California Industries for the Blind shops at an overall financial loss for the last ten years. This has usually been blamed on the inefficiency of the workers, rather than on inability of management to obtain profitable contracts or to organize production effectively. However, it should be pointed out that most C. I. B. employees are also recipients of Blind Aid. The liberal provisions of Blind Aid law require the deduction from the grant of no net earnings below \$85 per month and only half of net earnings above \$85. This has served as an incentive to recipients to earn but also has acted as a deterrent to the establishment of standard wages in the shops. Management, and shopworkers too, tend to view Blind Aid as supplementary payment.

The long term goal should be to reorganize the shops into regular production centers with proper equipment, a 40-hour week, skilled training for new employees, efficient management and decent wages. The result of such a reorganization would probably be to make the workshop a self-sufficient enterprise and to diminish the workers' dependence on public assistance. If the managers and directors of workshops were able or willing to make those changes, they would have done so long ago to the benefit of everyone. Obviously, they haven't.

Too long have the workers and the industry paid the terrible price of a disorganized, unorganized work force totally dependent on the good

will of others. Through your union you, and you alone, must exert organized leadership to break out of the strait jacket where "experts" tell you and public officials that substandard wages and insecurity will help to make you more secure. Only you, through your union, can tell the story which must be told. No one else can; no one else will.

The immediate problem is to prevent public officials and legislators from becoming confused by the concept of workshops as rehabilitation centers. The intent here is not to undermine legitimate programs. On the contrary, it must be admitted that one of the most significant steps in meeting the needs of handicapped persons was the federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act which led to the establishment of rehabilitation programs in all the states. But there is a two-fold danger in trying to achieve rehabilitation goals in sheltered shops. First, true rehabilitation is thwarted since the integration of employees into normal life is not achieved. Second, "rehabilitation" is used as an excuse for substandard conditions in the shops. Neither rehabilitation nor decent working conditions are achieved.

But if the shops provide normal working conditions without any pretense of rehabilitation, there is probably greater likelihood that employees will, in fact, become rehabilitated than under present circumstances. And even if chances for competitive jobs are not increased by the employees' exposure to more normal working conditions within the shops, at least their lives will not be wasted in the hopelessness experienced in performing dreary tasks at substandard wages.

A "NEW OUTLOOK" (?) ON SHELTERED SHOPS

By Floyd W. Matson

Although there have been many and diverse definitions of the character of sheltered workshops and the role of shop workers, most if not all of them may be reduced without violence to two general perspectives -- that of management and that of the workers. The extent to which these perspectives differ from one another may be graphically shown by contrasting the two articles immediately preceding this one with an article published in the June, 1963, issue of THE NEW OUTLOOK FOR THE BLIND.

The latter essay, entitled "The Sheltered Workshop of the 1960's," is the work of Dr. Herbert Rusalem, director of professional training and research at the Industrial Home for the Blind (a famous sheltered workshop) in Brooklyn. Dr. Rusalem's paper, originally delivered before a national rehabilitation conference in 1961, undertakes to define the changing historical character of the sheltered workshop and to outline its likely future course.

His article is commendable alike for its professional sophistication and refreshing candor. For the most part, a spade is called a spade and a workbench a workbench. Unfortunately, the candor is not quite complete: a shop worker is not called a shop worker (he is a "client"), and a workshop is called -- nearly everything else.

"The many-headed workshop of 1961," Dr. Rusalem begins, "is a far cry from the first formal workshop" which was set up in the United States in 1840, for the purpose strictly of employment. For example, "In 1840 there were no psychologists and social workers scurrying down the aisles, there were no attempts to construct a rational philosophy to justify its existence . . ." True enough; but are those things clear-cut indicators of progress? Many blind shop workers would regard it as more progressive to receive fewer such services and less such rationalization -- if they could be traded for better wages and conditions of work.

The single and simple economic purpose of the early workshop has been steadily replaced by a battery of subtle-sounding medical and technical objectives, as the NEW OUTLOOK article demonstrates. Dr. Rusalem notes that by 1958 an official report of the combined national workshop authorities "revealed that the major functions of the sheltered workshop had swelled from one to eight, with the one concerning the provision of gainful employment being located far down toward the bottom of the list."

It is instructive to cite some of the purposes which that management report considered superior to the provision of gainful employment. They include: "To provide a laboratory for vocational diagnosis and evaluation . . . To provide a setting for a sustained focus on the total needs of the individual especially for motivation, vocational exploration, and tryout. To provide a controlled environment with a graduated amount of shelter between physical restoration and vocational rehabilitation."

To his credit, Dr. Rusalem is not unaware of the increasing disproportion between the emphasis upon income-producing work and the proliferation of noneconomic services in the strange career of the sheltered shop. "Over the past century and a quarter," he points out, "as rehabilitation concepts took hold, the purpose of providing gainful employment for those who have no other placement opportunities gradually slipped

toward the bottom of the list. In its place, other more glamorous (sic) purposes took precedence and commanded disproportionate professional time, research, effort, and money."

Yet nowhere in his lengthy article, for all its lists of problems and needs facing the workshop of the future, is there recognition of the overriding need of shop workers themselves to be regarded fully and normally as workers -- and therefore to receive not only the right to organize, to be represented and consulted, but also to realize the dignity and independence which that right brings with it.

It is sadly ironic that among the urgent needs which this NEW OUTLOOK article does call attention to is "a need for upgrading workshop jobs in salary and status so as to compete with the blandishments of schools, social agencies, and industry." Note that the workshop jobs which the author has in mind are not the jobs of the disabled workers but the jobs of management staff. His concern for the welfare of these unfortunate people is entirely laudable; but his disregard for the welfare of the sheltered workers is shocking.

The shop workers are not, however, totally forgotten. After several pages devoted to the specialized and developing functions of supervision and servicing, the article closes with this remarkable pronouncement: "In such planning, we ought to turn to the consumer -- the disabled workshop client -- and procure from him his concept of the workshop of the 1960's. Well, we have done just that. Here is the product of our research."

Well, sirs -- it might be said in answer to this writer and to the NEW OUTLOOK -- with all respect, you have done just the opposite of that. The one thing you have carefully not done is to turn to the disabled workshop client and procure from him his concept of the workshop of the 1960's. But there is still time to do so, and there is no mystery about it. That concept is now being hammered out in the workshops of Berkeley and Los Angeles, of Cleveland and of Seattle, and of increasing numbers of other cities and states. That concept is the outgrowth of the prospects and fears of blind shop workers, forthrightly discussed above by Tom Joe. That concept is the heart of the matter under analysis by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek in his report, "Blind Shop Workers: What Are They?" which appeared in these pages last June. That concept is far from being the product of your research; it is the product of a very different kind of search. It is the outcome of a revolution of rising expectations and rising discontent on the part of a long-custodialized and underdeveloped group no longer satisfied with the rhetoric of social service and the untouchable status of sheltered dependency.

N. F. B. CONVENTION TAPES AVAILABLE

Tape recordings of the events of the 1963 convention of the National Federation of the Blind are now available for purchase by members and friends of the organization, according to an announcement by Franklin VanVliet, Federation treasurer, who has arranged for the tape reproduction of the sessions.

Price for the full recorded convention, a seven-reel set, is \$22.75. A few individual tapes, covering such events as the convention banquet and the address by Civil Service Commission Chief John W. Macy, are also available at \$2.00 per tape. Requests for further information, and orders for the tapes, should be addressed to Mr. VanVliet, R. F. D. No. 7, Penacook, New Hampshire.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN CIVIL SERVICE

"Within the last few years, a highly significant change in attitude has taken place in the Federal civil service -- a change from allowing equal opportunity to insisting upon it."

With these words, the Chairman of the United States Civil Service Commission, John W. Macy, Jr., set the tone for a concretely informative and encouraging address before the annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Philadelphia, July 6. Directly confronting the issue of "Equal Employment Opportunity Under the Merit System," Chairman Macy told his audience of 600 blind delegates that "one of our most urgent concerns at present is a vigorous effort to wipe out all forms of unfair discrimination in employment and advancement throughout the Federal service."

The present active campaign to erase discrimination against handicapped persons and minority groups is a relatively recent development, Macy admitted. Despite formal acceptance of the principle of equality in the Civil Service Act, "for a great many years equality of opportunity was more passive than active with respect to some groups of citizens . . . some of these people were actually prevented from taking civil service examinations -- for example, by arbitrary age limits, restriction of many positions to men only, or unrealistic physical ability requirements.

"Even where there were no such limitations -- and I am glad to say that all of them have now been removed -- there was not much in the way of positive effort to encourage or assist applicants to compete under adverse circumstances, or to assure that they received really fair consideration for employment after they qualified in competition," he said.

Among the reforms carried out under the new Federal Administration, according to the Commission chairman, are specific modifications of standard competitive tests to meet cases in which physical disabilities have penalized or disallowed a competitor from demonstrating his real competence at a particular job.

"A very simple example is the typing test: all competitors are rated on the same scale of speed and accuracy, but blind competitors are given dictating-machine records to type from in place of printed sheets of paper," Macy pointed out.

Another ingenious change has been made on a test for accuracy requiring the competitor to match a little measuring gauge, printed on a card, with rectangles of various sizes printed on sheets of paper. "For this test the blind competitor is given a sheet of heavy plastic with raised shapes on it, and a small metal bar. He matches the bar with the raised figures, and tells the examiner which ones are the same size."

In yet another test, used in certain very difficult examinations, conditions have been equalized for blind test-takers in a similar manner. The test is called "abstract reasoning," and requires the regular competitor to examine matched groups of small abstract figures on a printed page, identifying what makes them alike and what makes them different, Chairman Macy said. "The figures are things like circles with tangents in different positions, arcs of circles with dots inside or outside the curve, pairs of lines that touch and don't touch, and so on. We have had these figures embossed, in a much larger size, on heavy mats similar to the stereotypes used by newspapers. The blind competitor reads them with his fingers and dictates his answers to the examiner."

The civil service chief declared that "perhaps the most important of all our test modifications for the blind" is the simple fact that "in every case there is one competitor and one examiner." While sighted competitors are examined in groups, with a single examiner for all, every blind competitor has an examiner all to himself, he pointed out.

The last and most effective phase of the Civil Service Commission's program for hiring the handicapped was said to be the adoption of the "Coordinator" system, which permits greater attention to the problem of matching men and jobs. Under this plan the manager of a federal estab-

listment names a highly ranked employee to act as Coordinator for employment of the physically handicapped, Chairman Macy noted. Operating as a middleman between the handicapped applicant and the possible job, it is the Coordinator's "responsibility to know what jobs in his agency can be performed efficiently by persons with certain kinds of handicaps, to convince supervisors of the merits of hiring the handicapped, and to see to it that a handicapped applicant who is qualified for a job really gets full and fair consideration."

The rising success of the Coordinator system was graphically shown through statistics demonstrating that "in five years we more than tripled the percentage of handicapped persons hired (in the federal service), and the record is still improving." The key to the gain in job placement was seen by Chairman Macy to lie in the much greater personal attention, as well as perseverance, now given to each case by the Coordinator.

Stressing that "we have enough evidence to convince almost anyone of what the handicapped can do when given a fair opportunity," he pointed to the case of Miss Thelma Quesenberry, a telephone switchboard operator in the Department of Commerce, who had partial vision since childhood and has been totally blind since 1955. "This is a particularly interesting case in that it is a 'first' -- the first blind switchboard operator employed by the Federal Government under civil service. Although the Civil Service Commission approved the employment of blind switchboard operators more than four years ago, none was appointed until early this year. There will undoubtedly be many more appointments as more people learn to use the special switchboard," he asserted.

REPORT ON BLIND TUNERS' SEMINAR

By Stanley Oliver

(Editor's note: Mr. Oliver is a member of the board of the Michigan Council of the Blind and editor of its magazine, THE EYE-OPENER. He is also a member of the executive committee of the National Federation of the Blind. An advance report by Mr. Oliver on the Michigan seminar for blind piano tuners appeared in our April, 1963, issue.)

The campus of the Michigan School for the Blind was the site last June of a highly successful five-day seminar for active blind piano

servicemen, some 37 of whom were on hand. In the group were six instructors from schools for the blind and one member of the distaff side -- Miss Lenor McNish of Akron, Ohio. Ten states and two Canadian provinces were represented. The busy schedule of events listed ten workshops and a number of panel discussions and program talks.

The seminar was co-sponsored by the Detroit and Lansing chapters of the Piano Technicians Guild, the Michigan Council of the Blind, and the Michigan Association of Workers for the Blind. It came into existence as an outgrowth of activity from the national PTG committee on Problems and Affairs of the Visually Handicapped. This committee is comprised of Ignatius Chang, Hawaii; Earl Schwab, Los Angeles; Earl Pollard, national executive secretary of the PTG, and this writer. All members of the committee are blind and active in PTG organizational work.

Among the instructional staff were Sid Durfee of the Perkins Institute; Everett Oddie, editor of the BRAILLE PIANO TECHNICIAN; Tom Porter, head technician for the Baldwin Company of Chicago. Of considerable value was the participation of such notable sighted PTG officers as Irwin Otto, New York, who conducted a two-day session in major rebuilding, and George Lockhart, former national president, whose keen mind and long experience was an invaluable adjunct to the diversified activities.

Mr. E. Q. Miller, of the Adult Education Department of Wayne State University, expounded at length on a variety of problems common to small business, with special reference to blind tuners. Mr. Miller has worked the past several years with a broad cross-section of adults, helping them bring technical and associated skills into the operation of small business enterprises. His many carefully considered ideas brought on a lively floor discussion.

A large number of written evaluations from those participating in the five-day program have been received, and it seems obvious to the committee which organized the seminar that repetition on a geographically rotating basis, perhaps every two years, would receive warm approval from blind tuners. Visually handicapped tuners form perhaps ten percent of the total in the field. The better technicians are almost invariably active members of the PTG, an alert and highly effective professional society.

NEVADA LEADERS WIN CITIZEN AWARDS

Two leaders of Nevada's organized blind movement -- Mrs. Audrey Bascom and K. O. Knudson -- have been named as recipients of the "Outstanding Citizen" Award of the Nevada Savings and Loan Association. Knudson received the citation and accompanying plaque in June and Mrs. Bascom the following month.

Mrs. Bascom, president of the Nevada Federation of the Blind and also president of the Southern Nevada Sightless, is a board member of the National Federation of the Blind. She has been director of the blind center in Las Vegas since 1954, where she has devoted most of her time to developing the center as a rehabilitation facility and training agency for blind people. (Audrey was the subject of a biographical article in the May, 1963, issue of THE BLIND AMERICAN, as part of our series entitled "Meet the Blind Who Lead the Blind.")

Knudson, long an active leader in the Nevada Federation and the Southern Nevada Sightless, is a retired Las Vegas school administrator who served for 37 years as a school principal and director of the district's audio-visual program. A past grand master of the Masonic Lodge for the State of Nevada, he has been a recipient of the Variety Heart Award (1957), the Four Chaplains Award (1956), and was designated a Distinguished Nevadan by the University of Nevada in 1962. Knudson is also an honorary life member of the Las Vegas Shrine Club and an active member of the Nevada Historical Society, the Elks and the Oddfellows lodges in Las Vegas.

GUIDE DOGS NOT FOR CHILDREN

Representatives of eleven agencies for the blind -- among them three guide-dog training institutes -- have distributed a joint statement firmly opposing the placing of dog guides with children under the age of sixteen. Under the heading "Dog Guides are Not Recommended for Blind Children," the agency spokesmen pointed out that "dog guides are not pets" but working animals requiring responsible and mature handling.

"Without these mature qualities, blind children endeavoring to use dog guides subject themselves and others to undue risk. We have no objection to well-intentioned efforts to acquaint blind children with

dogs or other animals. We would, however, advise parents of blind children to examine carefully the prerequisites for safe and proper use of dog guides," the statement said.

"It would indeed be unfortunate, we feel, if the public gained the impression that blind children who do not have dog guides are, therefore, groping and helpless, with few if any opportunities to prepare for responsible citizenship. Those of us who have worked with blind children in school, camp and elsewhere know how inaccurate such an impression is."

Among those signing the statement are: William F. Johns, Executive Director of Guide Dogs for the Blind, San Rafael, California; Harold Pocklington, Executive Director of Leader Dogs for the Blind, Rochester, Michigan; George Werntz, Jr., Executive Vice President of Seeing Eye, Inc., and representatives of the American Foundation for the Blind, the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the U. S. Vocational Rehabilitation Administration and the Veterans Administration.

"To live effectively, blind children need to acquire many other skills before they are ready to take on responsibility for care and control of dog guides," the statement declared. "Except in rare instances, training with a dog guide should be postponed until the mid to late teens. Like learning to drive a car, learning to use a dog guide should be a privilege reserved for those who have fully demonstrated their maturity and responsibility."

N. F. B. RESOLUTION ON WHITE CANE LAW

(Editor's note: Following is the text of a resolution approved unanimously by the 1963 convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Philadelphia, July 6, 1963.)

"WHEREAS, the protection of the lives and limbs of blind pedestrians is a major concern of all of the blind of the nation; and

"WHEREAS, public safety education as to the meaning of the White Cane and the requirements of the White Cane Law is necessary

to obtain the maximum safety of such pedestrians;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind, in convention assembled, in the City of Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania, this 6th day of July, 1963, that:

"1. Our members, acting individually and through their local organizations, be urged to cooperate to the fullest extent to further public safety education campaigns; and

"2. Efforts should be made to persuade the governors of each of the fifty states to proclaim October 15th, 'White Cane Safety Day'; and

"3. Efforts should be made to enlist the cooperation of Lions Clubs, radio and television stations, newspapers, etc., to bring about the widest possible dissemination of this public safety education; and

"4. The editor of THE BLIND AMERICAN be requested to publish this resolution."

LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STATES

Among developments within the states affecting the welfare of blind Americans, during the 1963 legislative season, has been Arkansas' authorization to its Public Welfare Department to increase grants to blind recipients to a maximum of \$85 per month. Legislation was also approved providing that in determining the need of blind Arkansans the department shall treat as earned income the net proceeds realized by a person owning five or fewer cows, from the sale of their calves, or from any other farm product, with net proceeds averaged over the calendar year.

In Colorado and Indiana, the legislatures lined up with the federal program in providing that, for a blind individual who has a state-approved plan for achieving self-support, the county welfare department shall disregard for one year such additional amounts of income and resources as may be necessary to fulfill his rehabilitation plan.

Georgia this year enacted into law a measure providing that workers in the factories for the blind shall receive and observe all state holidays with pay, and passed another bill relieving the counties of the

normal four percent participation in medical care payments for recipients of aid to the blind.

In Iowa, the method of county payments from the poor fund for administrative costs of the AB fund was changed in order to permit increased federal aid for the program. Kansas, meanwhile, extended its earned-income exemption provision for blind aid recipients to meet requirements of the federal law.

In Rhode Island, a bill failed of passage which would have consolidated under one commission the present state services for welfare, rehabilitation, education, recreation, licensing and registration of the blind. Also defeated was a resolution creating a special commission to study the state's programs for the blind; and still another defeat was suffered by a measure designed to transfer the State Bureau for the Blind and the Advisory Council for the Blind from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education.

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

Californian in Peace Corps. Mike McAviney, former president and state delegate of the Monterey County Chapter of the California Council of the Blind, has entered the Peace Corps training program at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, according to the CCB BULLETIN. Upon completion of the training, Mike will be sent to Ecuador to work with blind students. He has just received his A.A. degree from Hartnell College in Salinas, where he was awarded the title of "Most Inspirational Student."

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New Jersey Sets Convention. The sixth annual convention of the State Council of New Jersey Organizations of the Blind will be held on Saturday, October 19, in the Brownstone House (West Broadway and Burhans Avenue), Paterson, New Jersey. President Myles Crosby extends a cordial invitation to all BLIND AMERICAN readers to attend the annual event, which will be climaxed by a banquet and dance.

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Massachusetts Blind Meet October 5. The 10th annual state-wide

convention of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts will meet in Springfield, October 5 and 6, under sponsorship of the Greater Springfield Association. More than 200 delegates from seven other affiliate chapters will convene to elect state officers and vote on policies. Special features of the convention will include an address by Russell Kletzing, president of the parent National Federation of the Blind, the chartering of a Greenfield-Athol chapter, a banquet and a dance at the Hotel Sheraton-Kimball. During the banquet an as yet unnamed chapter will be presented the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award for outstanding contributions advancing the welfare of the blind in the state.

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Carolinian Hails NFB Conclave. Marshall Tucker, veteran leader of the organized blind in South Carolina, gave his fellow Aurorans a vivid report on the NFB's Philadelphia convention in the pages of THE PALMETTO AURORAN, voice of the South Carolina Aurora Club of the Blind. Noting that he had been privileged to attend five of the last eight national conventions, Tucker observed: "In my opinion, this year's convention was by far the best. The question of survival did not have to be dealt with; for, in its place loomed the challenges of the future. Today's challenges were spelled out to us through speeches, reports and several very fine panel discussions....

"Why is the National Federation a great organization? It is because its members are willing to make sacrifices themselves for it. South Carolina Aurorans are no exception to this rule. Several members sacrificed their money, talents and time to see to it that Aurorans from all over the state could go to a national convention, who otherwise could not have gone on their own.... I am certain that the blind of South Carolina will be more closely knitted to the nation's blind, for twenty persons had an excellent opportunity to witness at first hand what a national organization of the blind can do and will do for its fellow-blind if only given the opportunity."

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Prevention of Blinding Disease Seen. A significant step toward the solving and prevention of the fatal Tay-Sachs disease, a deterioration of the nervous system resulting in blindness, has been taken at New York's Isaac Albert Research Institute, according to a recent report in the NEW YORK TIMES. Doctors at the Institute have assertedly succeeded in devising a test which identified carriers of the disease. This discovery is expected to represent the first effective step in the control of the rare disease.

One of the disease's mysteries is that most of the estimated

half-million carriers in the U. S. are persons of Jewish ancestry whose forebears lived in a narrow strip of land along the former Latvian-Polish-Russian border. It is generally believed that both parents must be carriers for their offspring to be affected, according to the TIMES. Through use of the newly developed test, carriers may now be identified and forewarned so that any two planning to marry will be aware of the risk involved.

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Alec Templeton Dead. The internationally famous blind pianist, Alec Templeton, died recently of cancer at his Connecticut home. The versatile entertainer, blind from birth, was 52 years old. He had been equally noted for his musical sense of humor and imaginative improvisations at the keyboard as well as for his brilliance as a serious performing artist. Accounts of his life have praised the attitude of his parents who wisely resolved that his blindness should not interfere with his leading a normal productive life. Famous in his home country of England during the late 1920's, Templeton came to America in 1936 and remained to become a citizen five years later.

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Denver Picnic. The annual "Colorado Day" picnic of the Denver Area Association of the Blind was well-attended on August 1 by about 70 active members and their families, according to our Colorado correspondent, Ethel Mahaney -- who adds that the yearly outing is virtually a time of reunion for many of the members who are unable to attend the Association's regular monthly meetings.

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A grateful overture of welcome is extended by THE BLIND AMERICAN to Mrs. Helen Kitchen Branson of Boise, Idaho, who has accepted an invitation to serve as our Correspondent on behalf of the Gem State Blind. Both Mrs. Branson and her husband, Ralph Branson, also blind, have signed contracts to teach at the Wilder, Idaho, high school, this fall -- and are believed to be the first sightless persons to be accepted as teachers in the state's public schools. Mrs. Branson, who holds a master's degree from the University of Southern California, is an accomplished reporter -- capable of providing a wealth of journalistic gems from the Gem State.

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"Hail, Columbia," Donald C. Capps, president of South

Carolina's Aurora Club of the Blind and 2nd Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind, penned the following lines in tribute to his home city of Columbia in the August issue of THE PALMETTO AURORAN: "It is a mighty disgruntled frog who does not croak about his own pond, but we simply do not believe that the country affords a finer city in which to live than Columbia, South Carolina. . . . It is here that blind students attend the University of South Carolina without difficulty. It is here that the first Center for the Blind in South Carolina was built. It is here that the only workshop for the blind in the state was erected four decades ago. It is here that the state agency for the blind assists the state's blind citizens. No city in the state or city of comparable size in the nation, we believe, has more blind people per capita employed than does the City of Columbia. It was Columbia that hired the state's first braille switchboard operator. It was Columbia that allowed a blind person to operate the concession at one of its parks. We hail thee, Columbia, and are grateful for your full acceptance and understanding of those of us who happen to be blind."

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Electronic Eye for Blind. Electronic aids, which now help the deaf to hear and the mute to speak, are being mobilized by science in order to assist the blind to "read" printed material quickly and easily, according to an article in the CCB OUTLOOK, official publication of the Canadian Council of the Blind. A University of British Columbia electrical engineer was said to be working on tonal morse and "spelled speech" systems toward this end.

While simple devices to translate letters into sounds -- such as the octophone -- have been known since 1914, the new systems promise to clarify sounds and permit much faster reading, the scientist said. He hopes to give tonal morse, which greatly cuts down the number of sounds, the "acid tests" in experiments with blind persons later this year.

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Golden Staters to Convene. The Fall 1963 convention of the California Council of the Blind will be held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, October 18, 19 and 20, according to Council President Jim McGinnis. He adds that a variety of informative speeches, panel discussions and reports will be on the agenda, and that "the convention committee is planning some surprises for the banquet" to be held Saturday evening, October 19.

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New Jersey Group Meets. The Associated Blind of New Jersey held its first annual meeting in New Brunswick in June "and set a course toward better protection for blind vending stand operators and the needy blind," according to the ASSOCIATED BLIND LEADER. Norbert Cifelli, of Trenton, was elected chairman of the board in a close race with Robert Owens, also of Trenton. Arthur Linsinbigler, Trenton, was named president of the group in ABNJ's statewide balloting, and Stanley G. Spaide of Audubon became executive vice president. Other v-p's elected are: First, Mildred Tremple; second, Fay Price; third, Marie Sullivan; fourth, Cecil Leon, and fifth, Nancy Farreny. Robert Owens was named executive secretary and legal agent. Resolutions dealing with the threat of automatic vending to blind vendors and with certain welfare regulations were adopted at the meeting.

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Swiss Home Training School. A holiday home operated by the Swiss Federation of the Blind near Vevey, Switzerland, was the scene recently of a special course in home economics designed for blind women and girls, according to a report by John Jarvis, Secretary-General of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, published in the CCB (Canadian Council of the Blind) OUTLOOK. The six students who took part in the course worked in groups of three while preparing meals, Jarvis reported, and each student was responsible for her own menu, with guidance from the teacher and her assistants. The students (two of whom are married) ranged from 24 to 50 years in age. The choice of subjects was left mainly to the students themselves, and was said to vary from such practical matters as the right use of spices and condiments to the relationship between diet and obesity.

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Virginia Meet Hailed. Highlights of last May's sixth annual convention of the Virginia Federation of the Blind were presented in graphic fashion in the August issue of the VFB NEWSLETTER. The article praised the dual performance of John Nagle, Washington, chief of the National Federation, who moderated a panel discussion on employment opportunities and also joined Tim Seward in detailing the progress of our legislation through Congress. Another national leader who did double duty was Don Capps, NFB Second Vice-President, who delivered the convention's banquet address and reported at length in another session on the work of South Carolina's state organization. Of his talks the NEWSLETTER said: "Mr. Capps' enthusiasm for the Federation work is so contagious that everyone must have left the convention determined to accomplish more during the coming year."

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Blind Man Aids Birth. Billy Roy, blind cafeteria manager of Chicago, found himself in an unaccustomed role -- that of obstetrician -- when he helped his wife successfully deliver their seventh child. Roy's impromptu medical performance, according to a UPI news story published in the Oakland (California) TRIBUNE, began when his wife woke him at 3 a.m. one night in August. He called a doctor and had begun shaving when his wife indicated that time had run out.

"It had to be done," Roy said later. "There is only one way a baby can come. I happened to catch the baby's head and work it out." His oldest daughter, 14, stood by and watched the delivery. Her father told her to cover the new baby while they waited for the doctor to arrive. The Roy family now includes five boys and two girls, all with normal sight. Roy's wife, Bernice, also 39, is partially blind.

"You can do a lot of things when pushed into them," Roy observed in summing up the adventure. "But let's not emphasize the blindness bit. I'm just a normal father who has learned not to be nonchalant about babies."

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"Thought you might like to know that 88 of our group took a ride August 10 on 'The Belle of Louisville.' " So reads a colorful postcard received from Bob Whitehead, the vigorous president of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind. The "Belle," as nearly all tourists to the Bourbon State know to their delight, is a historic sternwheel steamboat used for excursion trips on the scenic Ohio River. . . . We trust that the cause of Federationism was toasted in juleps along the way, to the tune of "The Beautiful Ohio."

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Dakota Site of Blind School. The North Dakota State School of Science, at Wahpeton, has been selected as the first school in the nation to be used as a regional trade training center for blind students, according to an article in the FARGO (N.D.) FORUM AND MOOREHEAD NEWS. The newspaper story, forwarded to us by Dr. Rudolph Bjornseth, head of the North Dakota State Federation of the Blind, noted that the training center will be a pilot demonstration project which, if successful, will lead the way to establishment of other such schools for blind trainees. The first group of eight blind students will start school in September and will emphasize machine shop training, along with electrical and electric-appliance repair.

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Guide Dog Service Offered. Second Sight - Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc., is embarking upon a public education program to explain its work, according to a release from the New York organization. Any totally blind person reportedly may apply for application forms, which will be sent by return mail. Once the application is completed by a member of the family and the medical questionnaire filled out by the physician and returned to Second Sight, Forest Hills, New York, the application will be processed and qualification determined within one month. If accepted the applicant goes to the Smithtown Training Center on Long Island, where he receives four weeks' training, food, lodging, and (in the candid language of the release) "custodial care" -- all free of charge. There are said to be no other expenses. Further information may be obtained by writing to: Second Sight - Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind Training Committee, Public Education Division, Forest Hills 11375, New York.

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Blind Masseur Rubs "Veep." "A soothing rubdown from a blind physical therapist helped Vice-President Lyndon Johnson enjoy a good night's sleep after a hard day of politicking and jet travel," according to an item in the SACRAMENTO UNION. The August news story was accompanied by a front-page photo of Vern I. Nelson, a licensed therapist who is well-known to California Council members and Federationists. The rubdown, applied in Johnson's hotel room, was a resounding success.

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Blind Father of the Year. William D. Myers, of Wilmington, Massachusetts, was recently named "Blind Father of the Year" by the National Fathers Day Committee. Myers, a project engineer at Avco Corporation, was honored in a ceremony conducted at New York City headquarters of the American Foundation for the Blind.

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Seeing Eye Goes Afield. Robert Whitstock, field representative of Seeing Eye, Inc., made a ten-state swing early this year, traveling over 10,000 miles while speaking on mobility and orientation at regional workshops for teachers of residential and public schools sponsored by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind. This summer Whitstock expects to log another 30,000 miles, addressing several conventions of blind groups and participating in additional university workshops.

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New Peter Putnam Book. Peter Putnam, well-known blind author of Cast Off the Darkness and Keep Your Head Up, Mr. Putnam, has written another book, entitled The Triumph of the Seeing Eye. Designed primarily for young readers, his nonfiction volume relates the story of the breakthrough which occurred when primitive man first recognized the guide potential of the jackal, progenitor of the dog -- a discovery which in the author's view reoccurs whenever blind man and guide dog are brought together.

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Handicapped American of the Year. David Hall, of Green Bay, Wisconsin, was the winner recently of the "Handicapped American of the Year" award presented by the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Hall, paralyzed as the result of an automobile accident, is supervisor of a sheltered workshop. The award was made at ceremonies which included addresses by President Kennedy and Larry LeSeuer, famed radio and TV commentator.

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Large-Type Encyclopedia. The publication of a large-type edition of World Book Encyclopedia, the first general encyclopedia for use of the partially seeing, has been announced by the publishers, Field Enterprises Educational Corporation of Chicago. To be completed early next year, the full set will total 30 volumes, all containing the printed and illustrated material found in the regular 20-volume World Book. Pre-publication orders are being taken, with the price for the entire set fixed at \$299, including transportation costs.

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